

# The Missouri Public Service Commission

*Informed Consumers, Quality Utility Services, and a Dedicated Organization for Missourians in the 21st Century*

## QUESTIONS ABOUT 'BUDGET BILLING'

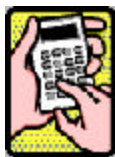
### What Is Budget Billing?

Essentially, budget billing is an "optional" payment program that allows you to pay the same amount each month for your electricity or natural gas usage throughout the entire year. This monthly bill is typically based upon your usage the previous 12 months. **The types of budget billing plans administered by each company may vary. Contact your local utility provider for details.**



### What Are The Advantages Of Budget Billing?

Budget billing gives you more certainty about what your electric or natural gas bill will be each month. Instead of paying high natural gas bills in the winter or high electric bills in the summer, you pay relatively the same amount all year. In low usage months, you will pay more than your actual bill. Likewise, when usage is high, your budget bill amount will be lower than your actual bill.



#### How Is The Budget Bill Amount Calculated?

Your energy company estimates your payment based on your previous year's consumption.

### What Factors Can Cause A Change In My Payment?

**Weather.** Warmer or colder than normal temperatures will impact the amount of electricity or natural gas you use. If you improve the energy efficiency of your home, your usage will be lower than expected. For example, you can improve home energy efficiency when you replace an old air conditioner, insulate your attic or seal air leaks. A change in the cost of electricity or natural gas or your monthly usage can also affect your payment.



#### Can My Budget Billing Amount Be Adjusted During The Year?

Yes. Your budget billing payment is reviewed periodically by your utility provider to avoid significant overpayment or underpayment. Your actual usage and rates, compared to the utility's estimated budget amount, may cause your budget plan payment to go up or down.



#### How Do I Sign Up For Budget Billing?

Contact your utility provider for information to see what type of plans they offer. In most cases, the only requirement is that you pay your bill on time. Customers may choose to leave "budget billing" at any time.



### Need Help Paying Your Utility Bills?

Programs like the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) can assist low-income Missourians with heating bills during the months of December, January, February and March. ECIP assists low-income customers who have their gas or electric service discontinued for non-payment or have received a notice of discontinuance.

Contact your local Community Action Agency about LIHEAP and ECIP or your local electric or natural gas company for a list of other organizations that provide energy assistance.

### **For more information**



Created in 1913, the Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) regulates over 1,000 investor-owned telecommunications, water and sewer, natural gas, electric and steam utilities. The PSC works to ensure that Missouri citizens receive safe, reliable and reasonably priced utility services. If you have an inquiry, billing question or service-related problem that your utility provider cannot answer, please call the PSC at **1-800-392-4211** or visit our website at **[www.psc.mo.gov](http://www.psc.mo.gov)**